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I. F. Stone's Weekly

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Moving Closer to The Doctrine of Preventive War

Too little attention has been paid to a disturbing declaration in the report with which the Committee on Appropriations cleared the new $40 billion defense budget for action on the floor of the House. In it, for the first time, so far as I know, a branch of our government has approved the idea of "pre-emptive war". The House had just begun its consideration of the bill as we were going to press, and we hope that either there or in the Senate, so fateful a statement of policy will not be allowed to stand without sober discussion of its implications.

Until now it has been the declared policy of our government that we would never initiate war, at least not a nuclear war. Now the powerful Appropriations Committee, in a report submitted with its unanimous approval by the respected chairman of its defense subcommittee, Rep. George H. Mahon, D., of Texas, puts forward a different doctrine. "In the final analysis," the report released April 29 says (p. 8), "to effectively deter a would-be aggressor, we should maintain our armed forces in such a way and with such an understanding that should it ever become obvious that an attack upon us or our allies is imminent, we can launch an attack before the aggressor has hit either us or our allies."

No Time for Debate—Too Late for Correction

This is not the full blown doctrine of preventive war, i.e. of initiating war when we think it necessitated by our national interest. It is "pre-emptive war", i.e. the initiation of war when, in the words of the House committee, it "ever became obvious" that an attack was coming "upon us or our allies." This assumes a faith so strong in military intelligence that we would be ready to commit national suicide on its assurance that we were "obviously" about to be attacked. The signal for us to anticipate and attack first would have to be given without consulting Congress; there would be no time for debate. If military intelligence turned out to be wrong, it would be too late for correction. A readiness for "pre-emptive war" seems to us a sure way of increasing the dangers of a world holocaust by miscalculation. It also involves another question, dramatized by the riots which yesterday ousted Rhee in Korea, today threaten Menderes in Turkey and tomorrow perhaps may signal trouble for Franco in Spain. What if one of these allied dictators—to save himself—convinced military intelligence that the riots were a form of "internal aggression" to be followed by attack from the Soviet Union or one of its satellites? An easy acceptance of "pre-emptive war" doctrine invites too dangerous a readiness to push buttons and pull triggers.

"Pre-emptive war" is bad enough, but if one looks at the hearings the Appropriations Committee has been holding on the defense budget, one begins to suspect that Mr. Mahon and his colleagues are ready for something more. In Part 7 of those hearings, which has just been released, one finds this colloquy between Mr. Mahon and Gen. Thomas S. Power, commander of the Strategic Air Command. It is at page 73 under the heading, "Preventive War:"

Mr. MAHON. It seems to me that as the head of SAC you would face up to what appears to me to be the facts of life—that all you are going to do is try to destroy a few hundred million or more of his people and his industry and completely paralyze him; but as far as hitting his bases generally, there are just too many of them; you cannot be sure of hitting them and he can use them to hit you. You cannot afford to start a preventive war.

Gen. POWER. Let me address myself to that question. I am not advocating preventive war. The mission of SAC is deterrence. . . . However, I think you can only deter by operating from a platform of strength. If we go on the premise of trying to deter a war, I also submit that you will not deter a war unless you have the capability to start a war.

Mr. MAHON. Right.

Gen. POWER. He must know you have the capability to start a war.

Mr. MAHON. Right; I agree.

Gen. POWER. If he thinks you cannot strike him, he will take this world over piece by piece, because he knows you will not initiate it. You will end up by standing alone.

Mr. MAHON. I suppose you agree, probably with most members of this committee, at least with me, that all of this big talk in which we engage to the effect that, no, we would under no circumstances more or less start a war, we ought to say less and less about that kind of matter and let the opponent be more on tenterhooks.

(Continued on Page Four)

Dr. Teller's Real Aims

"Not disarmament, but more and better nuclear weapons in the hands of more friendly nations should be the immediate goal of the United States, physicist Edward Teller said last night at Asilomar [California].

"The famed scientist, who played the leading role in the development of the hydrogen bomb, said in an address at the National Strategy Seminar that he thinks any disarmament agreement with Russia would be impossible to enforce under present conditions. 'Further development of nuclear weapons is desperately needed,' Teller said. . . . He said stopping nuclear research in the U.S. would 'betray the traditions of Western civilization.' . . . Teller said there was no danger of people being harmed by fallout from nuclear tests, unless the amount of testing is greatly increased. He called talk of fallout danger 'a bugaboo.' . . .

"Originally, Teller had announced that his talk would be 'off the record', but it was announced just before he spoke that he had changed his mind."

—Monterey Peninsula (Cal) Herald April 26.

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Why Are Congressmen So Pusillanimous About the Un-American Committee?

Not A Single Other Calif. Liberal Democrat Supported James Roosevelt

We urge our readers in California to organize a letter writing campaign to their Congressmen. It was shocking that not one of them had the courage to stand up and support, or indeed to stand up and fight back, when Congressman James Roosevelt struck out at the House Committee on Un-American Activities in his speech calling for its abolition April 25, though the main portion of that speech dealt with the Committee's cowardly hit-and-run attack last year on California teachers. We believe the other 29 Congressmen from California ought to be forced to stand up and be counted, especially since a 3-man subcommittee under Willis of Louisiana (with Moulder of Missouri and Scherer of Ohio) was scheduled to open new hearings in San Francisco May 10 "regarding the activities of the Communist Party of Northern California."

He Spoke to An Almost Empty House

That Mr. Roosevelt would speak on the Committee was known in advance to the rest of his delegation. He spoke to an almost empty chamber. The two California members of the Un-American Committee, the Republican Donald Jackson and the Democrat Clyde Doyle, failed to put in a defense of their activities. On the other hand, none of the liberal democrats showed up either. We think such Democrats as Chet Holifield, John Shelley, Jeff Cohelan, George Kasem, Clem Miller, Harold Johnson, John Moss, George Miller, B. F. Sisk, John McFall, Harlan F. Hagan, and D. S. Saund ought to put themselves on record. We believe the House Committee ought to be made an issue in every California district.

The most striking thing about the Roosevelt speech, which we hope readers will help to circulate (copies can be obtained by writing Congressman Roosevelt), is the disparity between the amount of protest in the State itself against the Committee's activities and the leaden silence in the State's Congressional delegation. Not only many of the State's leading newspapers but many of its leading organizations publicly opposed the Committee's attack on California's teachers and forced it to retreat. Among the organizations quoted by the Congressman in his speech were the Department of Social Relations, Episcopal Diocese of California; the California State Labor Federation AFL-CIO; the Southern California-Arizona Conference of the Methodist Church; the Friends Committee on Legislation of Southern California; the Building Trades Council of San Francisco; the San Francisco Bay Counties District Council of Carpenters; and the national convention of American Federation of Teachers.

There has never been such an outpouring of protest in any single State and it was the first time the Committee has been forced to back down, first postponing and then cancelling the hearings for which it had subpoenaed 110 teachers. In June it smeared these as part of an "extensive and malignant" conspiracy, but its annual report in February says not one word about the plot in California. "For all we know from the report," Mr. Roosevelt told the House, "the State of California is a veritable Gibraltar of safety, immune from the dangers the committee once proclaimed were so dire." Yet none of the other liberal democrats it sent to Congree have had the courage to speak up.

New York Times For Abolition

To have America's leading newspaper join in the cry for abolition of the Un-American Activities Committee is an event of first importance. On April 30 the New York Times published an editorial supporting Rep. James Roosevelt's "massive attack on the Committee" and calling attention to the decision by the American Civil Liberties Union at its biennial conference in Chicago "for a 'maximum effort' to abolish it." Said the Times, "Just as the Senate had ultimately to take responsibility for the outrages committed in its name by the late Senator McCarthy, so the House is responsible for the actions of Representative Walter's Un-American Activities Committee."

Other newspapers quoted by Rep. Roosevelt as critical of the Committee: the Newark, N. J., Evening News, the San Francisco Chronicle, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, the Washington Post, the San Francisco News-Call Bulletin, and the Los Angeles Mirror-News. The New York Post has steadily campaigned against the Committee, as have two smaller liberal papers, the Madison, Wis., Capitol-Times and the York, Pa., Gazette.

In A Passage of High Satire, Roosevelt Attacks Cruelty of the Blacklist

"Not only does it [the House Committee] assume that so-called un-American persons are incapable of decent thoughts, it also considers them unfit for gainful employment. Year after year the committee has ferreted out new areas of our country which it considers vital and from which it wants to abolish such persons. This year it is the Protestant clergy. Last year, for example, one of these areas was the meatpacking industry.

"Now, personally, I am willing to eat meat even though packed by political heretics. I am also willing to eat Russian caviar. But the committee sees farther and fears for our safety. What if there were a war, it says? Could not these evil persons poison or hold up our meat supply? My friends, I suppose they could. I suppose they could put nails in our tires too if they worked in Akron or just deprive us of sleep by cleaning the streets too noisily at night. But I see no logical end to this kind of anxiety except to say that such heretics cannot be permitted gainful employment, and then I suppose we should put them to death to avoid watching them starve.

"Now are we really this afraid? Do we need to appoint a committee to drive people out of their jobs. Does the country really benefit from the fact that John Doe came before the committee and told it that Mary Jones' real name is Mary Jonovitch and she is or had been a Communist; that he has thereby cost her her job as a meat wrapper at the Weak-Hearted Meat Co., and put her and her children on relief, and that Mary Jones cannot henceforth find a job? Let me say flatly that my answer is 'No', and that it is to our eternal disgrace that we sponsor such misuse of our authority. And let me also ask, what is to become of Mary Jones and her children? Who will employ her unless it is someone else whom we had made a pariah.

"Do we really expect that after this sort of wanton cruelty and degradation, she and her children will continue to think of this country as a land of freedom and tolerance for differences? Or have we not more probably just recruited new persons for the ranks of bitterness and extremism."

—Rep. James Roosevelt (D. Cal) in the House April 25.

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Quick Action at the Summit and A Special Session Advised for Ratification

Gore Executes A 180-Degree Turn and Comes Out For A Test Treaty

MYSTERIOUS REVERSAL: In what looked like a complete 180 degree turn, Senator Gore (*D. Tenn*), made a speech in the Senate April 27 and said he had resolved his doubts in favor of supporting the President if he reaches a nuclear test agreement with the Russians. Since Gore has been carrying the ball for the AEC in both the Foreign Relations and Joint Atomic Energy Committees, and led the browbeating given Dr. Hans Bethe recently at an executive session of the latter, the speech evoked surprise. One explanation (gossip) was that he had been warned that if he opposed a treaty he gives up his hope of being the Democratic vice-presidential candidate. Another (surmise), based on Gore's curious reference to the talks Senator Sherman Cooper "and I and our wives" have had "on this subject," is that Mrs. Gore and Mrs. Cooper exercised a softening influence. The Senator insisted, however, that the terms of the treaty must not deviate from those offered by Ike and Macmillan Feb. 11 and that a moratorium on smaller tests was not "to be considered and made operative" until after "means of detection are agreed to and in operation." How do you negotiate without some concessions? Can Gore use these conditions as escape hatches? If the Russians are wise they will speed agreement this year, and Ike will call a special Senate session. This election year a treaty can be ratified. Next year will be more difficult.

Too Patriotic for His Own Good?

SUPREME COURT: Last Monday agreed to hear the appeal of George Anastaplo, denied admission to the bar in Illinois because he refused to answer questions about his political associations and upheld the right of revolution. The bar examiners, in rejecting him, admitted (1) there was no evidence of any subversive affiliations and (2) his "strongly libertarian views . . . are not inconsistent with those held by many patriotic Americans". The Court remanded the cases of two University of Washington professors, one in history, the other in Romance languages (Howard L. Nostrand and Max Savelle) who had refused to take loyalty oaths. The majority per curiam sent the case back for a hearing at which the professors could explain. Douglas and Black objected that this was waste motion since the State law requires removal for refusal to take the oath "on any grounds."

FULBRIGHT AND SUEZ: The American Jewish community will be very foolish to engage in bitter controversy with the humane and enlightened Senator from Arkansas over its pro-Israel pressure in the "freedom of the Suez" amendment to the Mutual Security Act. It would be better to stand on the irrefutable point made by Douglas of Illinois: If the World Bank could withhold aid from Nasser to pressure him into paying off the Suez canal stockholders, why can't the U.S. threaten to withhold aid unless Nasser respects international law and allows use of the Canal by all, including Israel?

DON'T IKE'S GHOST WRITERS READ THE PAPERS? Even among the stuffed shirts gathered for the dinner here Monday night at which the President appealed for foreign aid, the reference to Turkey "as a bastion of freedom" evoked a titter.

In Tribute to Prof. Lynd

By H. H. Wilson

Professor, Political Science, Princeton

On Tuesday, May 12, Prof. Robert S. Lynd will conduct his last seminar before retirement from the Dept. of Sociology at Columbia University. There are few American students, and few students of America, who do not know his name. For his classic studies, MIDDLETOWN, and MIDDLETOWN IN TRANSITION, have established a standard of perception and understanding of American society that is unlikely to be surpassed. His KNOWLEDGE FOR WHAT? is a brilliant, scathing and creative analysis of American social science. It is a challenge to all who care about America and about learning; it is a challenge to provide "fire in the belly of democracy."

There is a time and a place for an adequate analysis of Robert S. Lynd, scholar. Here one would like to convey some sense that Bob Lynd is a great teacher and a great human being. A great teacher because, while maintaining rigorous intellectual standards, he has insisted on talking about the crucial problems; a great human being because he has never ceased to be sensitive to the problems confronting his students and his friends. To all who know him, and to many who have never met him, he has given courage to live and study with integrity.

Retirement is a misnomer for which one is grateful. For in practice it means that Prof. Lynd will have time to complete his major work on a theory of power in modern society, and Bob Lynd will continue to devote countless hours to encouraging those who never had the privilege of sitting in his classroom. A great teacher never really retires, for his books, his articles, his students will continue to encourage, stimulate, guide and inspire those who seek a society worthy of men.

"Free Elections" in "Free Asia": Rep. Meyer on the Polls in Formosa and Vietnam

"Mr. Speaker, when a Communist country holds an election we criticize the absence of choice in the balloting. Should we not be even more critical when such elections take place in what is called the free world? Our press frequently refers to Formosa as a bastion of freedom in the Far East, but this is what happened in the recent election of Nationalist China:

"1st, President Chiang Kai-shek was the only candidate allowed on the ballot. 2d, The Constitution was suspended for one day because it forbade a third term. 3rd, The only way electors could vote against Chiang was to cast a blank ballot and so they were thrown out as invalid. 4th, Eighty-five percent of the Formosans are native Taiwanese but they were allotted only two percent of the electoral votes."

"Mr. Speaker, yesterday I gave facts exposing the farce of so-called democratic free elections on Formosa. . . . Now we have word about so-called favorable election results in Laos. But we hear little about the use of the army and other measures to secure such results. I know enough of the facts, and have forewarned about them previously, to report that instead of being able to cite a case of a democratic free election we will hear claims that these elections have been rigged.

"How long can the prestige of Western democracy and freedom be sustained in the Far East if there is so little of it or even honesty in so many places where we exert an influence? . . ."

—Rep. Meyer (D. Vt.) in the House, April 26-27.

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It's the Moral Gap, Not the Missile Gap, That Threatens Us

(Continued from Page One)

This is a very confused passage, but it is revealing in its confusions. It begins with Mr. Mahon saying that we cannot afford to wage a preventive war because even if we smashed an enemy's industries and cities and killed millions of people, we would be unable to wipe out all the missile bases from which he could--though in his dying agony—wreak havoc on our cities and people. But it proceeds to the proposition—on which General Power and Mr. Mahon agree—that we must have the *capability* to start a war, and we ought no longer to engage in "all of this big talk" about how we would never start a war so that we can keep "the opponent . . . more on tenterhooks" lest we launch a preventive war.

No Way to Make The Planet Safer

But you can only keep an enemy "on tenterhooks" if you make this kind of strategy look more than a bluff. You have to indoctrinate your people with that mixture of ferocity and fanaticism which makes preventive war palatable. You have to build up overwhelming force great enough to give you a fighting chance to smash everything the enemy has in the first strike, crippling his retaliatory power along with his industrial capacity. This is a tall order, requiring a sharp stepup in the arms race and a kind of emotional mobilization, a constant human alert. These, as if by reflex action, would evoke a similar effort by the enemy, and pretty soon both sides would be "on tenterhooks." The course fore-shadowed in the colloquy between General Power and Mr. Mahon is not a course calculated to make this planet a safer spot on which to live.

The point of view favored by the Appropriations Committee is that of the Air Force. It is opposed by the Army, which thinks limited war more likely, and wants more money spent on a mobile Army to wage it. The Air Force strategy is also opposed by the Navy, which sees the Polaris submarine as a weapon which can deter an attack because even if our homeland were destroyed, these submarines could bring down a farewell shower of death on the enemy's cities. The opposing Navy and Air Force viewpoints were presented by Admiral Arleigh Burke and Gen. Curtis Le May in some little noticed hearings held at the end of March before the Holifield civil defense subcommittee of House Government Operations.

Maybe We Ought to Have Our Heads Examined, Too?

Mr. [Geo. H.] MAHON [D. Tex]. It was irrational, I would say, for the Japanese to have attacked us at Pearl Harbor. . . . So, it seems to me, that anyone who starts a war now would be in a measure guilty of lunacy in the first degree. We cannot always depend upon the opponent being a rational, clear-headed type.

Secretary of the Air Force [Dudley C.] SHARP. . . . If the enemy is absolutely sure that we are going to destroy him immediately, I think he would have to be an insane person to even think of attacking us.

Mr. MAHON. General White, do you have any comment on that question which I raised?

Gen. [Thos. D.] WHITE [Chief of Staff, US Air Force]. I do not have any trouble about the rational, but the irrational decision to wage atomic war certainly means serious damage to both sides . . . in that sort of a situation both sides are going to suffer disaster.

Mr. MAHON. Would it be worthwhile to try to have a defense program that would be adequate to cope with an irrational opponent? Would that be futile?

Gen. WHITE. I think we should strive to have good insurance against either a rational or an irrational decision. As to the latter, it is very difficult to say, because we certainly could put everything in the nation in the defense business and we still could not be sure in my opinion.

—House Approp. Com. Hearings on the 1961 Defense Budget, Part 2, Pages 238-39.

There Gen. Le May argued for a "counter-force" strategy. He advocated an arsenal of big weapons so overwhelming it could knock out an enemy's cities and his retaliatory bases *"no matter how the war is initiated."* Gen. Le May, now vice chief of staff for the Air Force, did not argue for preventive war but the implication was there.

More threatening than the well-advertised missile gap is the widening moral gap implicit in these calculations. We hope these cold military equations, embodying so monstrous an absence of moral values and human feelings, will not go unchallenged in the House and Senate debates over the defense budget. More important than any specific issue at the coming summit is to save mankind from this kind of thinking.

IFS Speaks At Princeton War-and-Peace Panel Monday Night, May 9, 7:30 p.m., Woodrow Wilson Hall

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